

# Notes on the North York Moors National Park Authority Northern Area Parish Forum

## Danby Lodge National Park Centre

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7:00pm.

The Parish Councils or equivalent which constitute the Northern Area are as follows:

Aislaby	Great Ayton
Borrowby/Newton Mulgrave/Scaling/Roxby	Grosmont
Castleton	Guisborough
Commondale	Kildale
Danby	Little Ayton
Easby	Lockwood
Egton	Sneaton
Eskdaleside cum Ugglebarnby	Ugthorpe and Hutton Mulgrave
Glaisdale	Westerdale
Goathland	

The attendance at the meeting in total was some 15 people. These included 7 NPA staff, some 4 NYC councillors who sit on the NPA and less than 5 members of Parish Councils. There were no apologies for absence from PC's or equivalent and there was comment from the NPA team that the Parish Council or equivalent representation was very low.

Once the minutes of the meeting are published by NYMNP, exact numbers and representation will be available.

### Dealing with the items on the agenda in order:

#### 1. Welcome

This was given by Colin Williamson, the Northern Area Forum chair and Northern Area Parish Council Member of the NPA. He chaired the meeting.

#### 2. Apologies

There were no Apologies from PC's for non-attendance. Also. The Highway Authority had been invited to attend to present on traffic and highway planning for the National Park area but had sent apologies as they were unable to attend.

#### 3. Notes of the Previous Meeting

No questions were raised in this section, and the notes from the last meeting which had been pre-circulated were accepted. A comment was made following the presentation on "Meadows, Verges and Boundaries: connecting Parishes through nature" at the previous meeting that no Parish Councils had contacted the NPA for help or guidance on verge management or wildlife pathways and a reminder was given that this is a legal requirement to have considered and planned for the inclusion of this in Parish Council business.

#### 4. Presentation on Revival North Yorkshire (RNY) by Debbie Swales – Managing Director

- This was an interesting presentation. They are very active in Sleights and there are some new staff in Sleights assisting with delivery of newsletters, a new FAB club, Mental Health support and also a Men Without a Shed group and a Knit and Natter.
- They now have a budget of circa £300,000 and are receiving some significant grants. However, they are currently seeking a further £51,000 this year to fulfil their budget. They have numerous applications in to enable them to deliver this.

5. Presentation on the update to Danby Lodge and Car Park Strategy by Lucas St. John, Commercial Manager.

- As identified at the last meeting, the Danby Lodge National Park Centre has not had a post-covid recovery in visitor numbers (still down 50,000 per year) and was seeking to increase its attractiveness to visitors. Therefore, at the Centre they have invested significantly in a new playground which is launching in May. They are also seeking to change suppliers for the café as it is perceived as being not good value for money. They are also looking at putting in place signage to better link the centre to the Danby railway station for pedestrians.
- There are plans to improve the car parks at Newton under Roseberry, Hutton le Hole, Sutton Bank, Thornton le Dale and Danby Lodge. I raised a query regarding Blue Bank regarding parking by camper vans, lorries, overnight parking and rubbish. The reply was that Blue Bank has not been forgotten but there are a number of issues that have delayed action. These were:
  - Lack of power to put charging points or barriers in place
  - The site is adjacent to an SSSI and requires special consideration
  - NYC do not want to see entrance barriers due to potential queuing back onto A169
  - An additional sign had been put up but had been torn down.
  - NYM have indicated that they will not provide additional litter bins or increase the frequency of emptying the existing bins

I also raised the issue regarding two car parks with separate entrances of which only one was signed as an NYM car park. This did not seem to have been considered.

I also had a conversation with Lucas after the meeting and while he commented that he was liaising with our Parish Council through the Clerk he recognised that communication, in particular given that assurances of action had previously been given, could be better.

6. Chris France, Director. Of Planning for the NPA then gave a general update on planning issues. They have submitted a response to central government consultation on de-restricting barn and property conversions and allowing repurposing within permitted development rights. He noted that they would like all PC's to include consideration of Dark Skies in any comments on planning applications. There is a new Design Code being sent out for consultation in November by the NPA. Once finalised, this will be Policy and not guidance only as current.

7. There was a presentation on the new NYMNP Design Code by Paul Fellows, Head of Strategic Policy

- This will be used as a planning gateway for assessing applications once it has been finalised and accepted. This is expected to be around Spring 2025.
- There will be a consultation with all affected areas. This is likely to involve a number of Roadshows and probable on-line participation as there are 115 affected communities within the National Park area. There were a number of comments around this regarding the need to accommodate those who cannot travel or do not have digital access.
- I raised the question of areas like Eskdaleside where one side of the road is in the NYMNP and the other isn't and that this could potentially cause planning issues with the application of one set of rules on one side of the road and a different set on the other. The response was that NYMNP are ahead of NYC in the preparation of a new Design Code and expect that theirs will be active first. They stated that they will liaise with NYC as NYC develop their document if requested to do so.

7. Update on National Park Authority Business by Colin Williamson

- See attached briefing sheet issued at the meeting

8. Suggestions from Forum Members on any new items to discuss at future meetings

- No further suggestions were made.

9.Any other business

- None

9.Date and Time of next meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 probably at Guisborough

Andy Harrison  
15th April 2024

## General Update

Members recently approved the Authority's budget for 2024/25 at just over £14 million of income & expenditure. This is a result of excellent work by the Officer team in developing externally funded projects and delivering Section106 payments resulting from major developments. However, our core funding continues to decline in real terms making the delivery of core-funded services like rights of way maintenance more and more challenging.

Government has launched a new Targets and Outcome Framework for Protected Landscapes. This sets targets at a national level for National Parks and National Landscapes that will be incorporated into our Management Plans. The targets cover things like new woodland creation, peat restoration, areas of new habitat created or restored and inclusive access.

In addition, Parliament approved changes to legislation late last year that now make it a requirement for all Relevant Authorities to 'seek to further' the statutory purposes of National Parks. This is a major change, significantly strengthening the previous duty of regard to consider these purposes. Relevant Authorities include Government departments, local authorities and Parish Councils.

## Linking Levisham

The Authority, in partnership with Forestry England, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway has been successful in securing funding from Defra for a 2 year Landscape Recovery project to look at how the Levisham estate and adjoining Newtondale can become a flagship site of national importance in terms of climate change adaptation and nature recovery. The partnership will work with landowners, tenants and other stakeholders to look at land management practices that deliver climate and nature objectives but also support financially viable farm businesses as well.

## Local Nature Recovery Plan

The Authority has developed a draft Local Nature Recovery Plan identifying priority habitats and species for us to focus on in our work. The Plan will support the two Local Nature Recovery Strategies that are being drawn up under the Environment Act for the Tees Valley and North Yorkshire. LNRs will have an important statutory role and influence policies such as Local Plans. A consultation is open on our web site.

## Property work

Over the next few months, a considerable number of improvements will be taking place to our National Park Centres at Danby Lodge and Sutton Bank. At Danby Lodge a new playground is being installed during April and May with an exciting design that brings to life some of the special features of the National Park. In addition to this a sensory area and art trail is being established. At Sutton Bank, the accessible path for trampers is being extended by a further 500m to allow access to the impressive views over Whitestone Cliff on to Lake Gormire. A Changing Places toilet will also be installed as part of a project being funded via the National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative.

The Authority is also exploring options for building a new southern Ranger Depot and head office building in Helmsley. The organisation's property needs have evolved considerably since the pandemic and significant investment is required to upgrade the current premises. A full business case will be taken to Members later this year.

### **Car Parking**

The Authority continues to invest in car parking infrastructure across the National Park to alleviate visitor impact in particular hotspot areas. During the winter we have created an additional 25 spaces at Newton-under-Roseberry which is an area of high demand. The car park has also been resurfaced and EV charging will be installed here later in the Spring. EV charging has already been successfully installed at Hutton-le-Hole car park during March. New signage and interpretation boards will be rolled out during this year at certain sites.

### **Arts and Culture Partnership**

A new Arts and Culture Partnership for the North York Moors has recently been established which brings together a range of artists and local organisations to highlight the connectivity between of arts, landscape and health and wellbeing and to develop collaboration and support between partners. Building on some considerable assets already in place, including the *Inspired By...* Gallery, the overall aim is to ensure that the North York Moors is seen as a 'Beacon for the Arts' and work towards a National Park Year of Arts of Culture within the next few years. A development project bid to take this forward has recently been submitted to Arts Council England.

### **Design Code**

As you have just heard the main planning policy work this year is the production of the Design Code for the National Park – which highlights the importance of achieving good quality and locally distinctive new buildings fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The success of this important document will be very much reliant on the input of local people who live and work in the North York Moors – so a final reminder – please look out for the consultation and have your say!

### **Affordable Housing**

Progress on delivering the Authority's ambition to double affordable housing delivery across the National Park over the five-year Business Plan has been slower than hoped for. Despite at least 12 potential housing schemes agreed with our main housing provider, no actual planning applications have yet been submitted and we are therefore keen to kickstart the process. One of the main challenges is available land at a value that a Housing Association can afford – so please contact the planning team if you own land in or on the edge of an existing village and are interested in helping keep our young people in housing in the National Park. - [policy@northyorkmoors.org](mailto:policy@northyorkmoors.org)

### **Second Homes and Holiday Lets**

Following consultation last year, the government has announced its intention to control the spread of short term lets through the planning system. National Parks have been calling for planning control over second and holiday homes for many years in places. The announcement will mean that there will be a new use class introduced for short term lets though the government has left it to local authorities to decide whether a change from a permanent dwelling to a short term let will require planning permission by needing to introduce so-called Article 4 Regulations.